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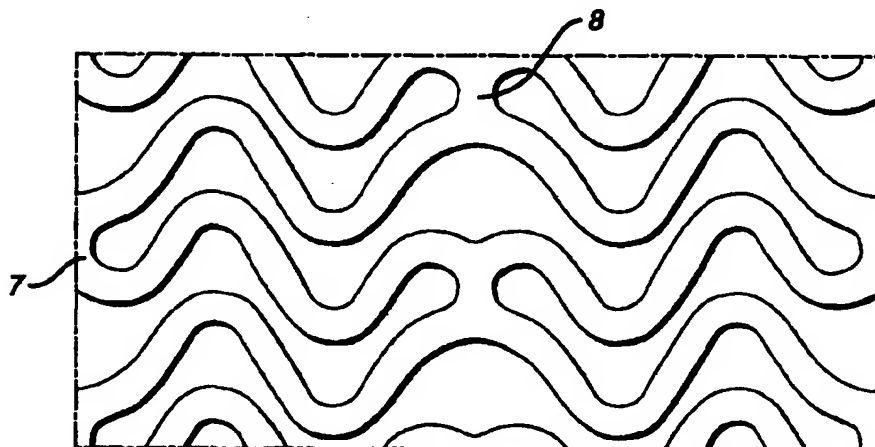
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(54) **Bifurcated axially flexible stent**

(57) A stent with axial flexibility, in a preferred embodiment, has a longitudinal axis and comprises a plurality of longitudinally disposed bands, wherein each band defines a generally continuous wave along a line segment parallel to the longitudinal axis. A plurality of

links maintains the bands in a tubular structure. In a further embodiment of the invention, each longitudinally disposed band of the stent is connected, at a plurality of periodic locations, by a short circumferential link to an adjacent band. Further, a pair of bifurcated stents is disclosed.

FIG. 2



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EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT

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DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT			
Category	Citation of document with indication, where appropriate, of relevant passages	Relevant to claim	CLASSIFICATION OF THE APPLICATION (Int.Cl.6)
Y	WO 97 26840 A (DEKA PRODUCTS LIMITED PARTNERSHIP) 31 July 1997 (1997-07-31) * the whole document *	1-5	A61F2/06
Y	WO 96 29955 A (ANEURX, INC.) 3 October 1996 (1996-10-03)	1-5	
A	* page 17, line 14 - page 18, line 29; figures 14-16 *	21	
X	WO 96 34580 A (DIBIE) 7 November 1996 (1996-11-07) * the whole document *	6,12-15	
X	WO 97 15346 A (SHAKNOVICH) 1 May 1997 (1997-05-01) * the whole document *	6,12-15	
X	NL 1 000 180 C (MULDER ET AL) 22 October 1996 (1996-10-22) * the whole document *	6,12,13,15	TECHNICAL FIELDS SEARCHED (Int.Cl.8)
			A61F
The present search report has been drawn up for all claims			
Place of search THE HAGUE		Date of completion of the search 14 September 2000	Examiner Smith, C
<p>CATEGORY OF CITED DOCUMENTS</p> <p>X : particularly relevant if taken alone Y : particularly relevant if combined with another document of the same category A : technological background O : non-written disclosure P : intermediate document</p> <p>T : theory or principle underlying the invention E : earlier patent document, but published on, or after the filing date D : document cited in the application L : document cited for other reasons & : member of the same patent family, corresponding document</p>			

EPO FORM 1500 (03-82) (P04C91)



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CLAIMS INCURRING FEES

The present European patent application comprised at the time of filing more than ten claims.

- ☐ Only part of the claims have been paid within the prescribed time limit. The present European search report has been drawn up for the first ten claims and for those claims for which claims fees have been paid, namely claim(s):
- ☐ No claims fees have been paid within the prescribed time limit. The present European search report has been drawn up for the first ten claims.

LACK OF UNITY OF INVENTION

The Search Division considers that the present European patent application does not comply with the requirements of unity of invention and relates to several inventions or groups of inventions, namely:

see sheet B

- ☒ All further search fees have been paid within the fixed time limit. The present European search report has been drawn up for all claims.
- ☐ As all searchable claims could be searched without effort justifying an additional fee, the Search Division did not invite payment of any additional fee.
- ☐ Only part of the further search fees have been paid within the fixed time limit. The present European search report has been drawn up for those parts of the European patent application which relate to the inventions in respect of which search fees have been paid, namely claims:
- ☐ None of the further search fees have been paid within the fixed time limit. The present European search report has been drawn up for those parts of the European patent application which relate to the invention first mentioned in the claims, namely claims:



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**LACK OF UNITY OF INVENTION
SHEET B**

Application Number
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The Search Division considers that the present European patent application does not comply with the requirements of unity of invention and relates to several inventions or groups of inventions, namely:

1. Claims: 1-5,21,22

A bifurcated stent system with openings in lateral wall.

2. Claims: 6-20

A balloon system for delivering a stent system within a bifurcated lumen.

**ANNEX TO THE EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT
ON EUROPEAN PATENT APPLICATION NO.**

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This annex lists the patent family members relating to the patent documents cited in the above-mentioned European search report. The members are as contained in the European Patent Office EDP file on
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For more details about this annex : see Official Journal of the European Patent Office, No. 12/82

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